

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended) An apparatus for dyeing fiber or filament comprising:

- (a) a plurality of prewetting troughs;
- (b) a plurality of dye baths; and
- (c) a drying arrangement;

characterized in having a supporting system for carrying and dyeing the fiber[[s]] continuously and homogenously.

Claim 2. (currently amended) An apparatus for dyeing fiber or filament as claimed in claim 1, wherein the supporting system comprises a belt for carrying and dyeing fiber.

Claim 3. (currently amended) An apparatus for dyeing fiber or filament of claim 2, wherein the belt is a porous belt.

Claim 4. (currently amended) An apparatus for dyeing fiber or filament of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the supporting system comprises at least two belts to carry and dye the fiber.

Claim 5. (currently amended) An apparatus for dyeing fiber or filament of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein cotton fiber is carried between the porous belts.

Claim 6. (currently amended) An apparatus for dyeing fiber or filament of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the belt is a synthetic or natural fabric.

Claim 7. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the belt is a blended fabric.

Claim 8. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the supporting system is inert to dyeing.

Claim 9. (currently amended) An apparatus for dyeing cotton fiber of claim 5, wherein the supporting system is a porous tubular network.

Claim 10. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fibers comprising:

- (a) carrying the fibers using a supporting system;
- (b) pre-wetting the fibers along with the supporting system;
- (c) dyeing the fibers along with the supporting system with a dye; and
- (d) drying the fibers,

wherein the dyeing of fibers is continuous and homogenous.

Claim 11. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fibers as claimed in claim 10, wherein the fiber is carried between the supporting systems.

Claim 12. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fibers as claimed in claim 10, wherein the fibers for dyeing includes fibers selected from the group consisting of cotton, and other natural fibers, man made fibers, and synthetic fibers, ~~as well as~~ filaments and [[a]] combinations thereof.

Claim 13. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fibers as claimed in claim 10, wherein the fiber is ~~the~~ cotton fiber.

Claim 14. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fiber as claimed in claim 13, further comprises comprising a the step of preparing a fiber rope for carrying cotton fibers.

Claim 15. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fiber as claimed in claim 10, wherein the dye ~~includes~~ is selected from the group consisting of indigo, vat dye, sulfur dye, reactive dye ~~and the like, or and combinations thereof~~.

Claim 16. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fiber as claimed in claim 10, wherein the fibers are indigo dyed.

Claim 17. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fiber comprising the steps of:

- (a) forming a roving form of fiber;
- (b) prewetting the fiber in the roving form;
- (c) dyeing the fiber in the roving form; and
- (d) drying the fiber in the roving form;

wherein the fiber[[s]] ~~are~~ is dyed continuously and homogenously.

Claim 18. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fiber as claimed in claim 17, wherein the roving form of fiber for dyeing ~~includes~~ is selected from the group consisting of cotton, ~~and~~ other natural fibers, man made fibers, ~~and~~ synthetic fibers, ~~as well as~~ filaments and a combination thereof.

Claim 19. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fiber as claimed in claim 17, wherein the fiber for dyeing is cotton fiber.

Claim 20. (currently amended) A method for dyeing fiber comprising the steps of:

- (a) forming a tow form of filaments;
- (b) prewetting the tow form of filaments ~~in tow form~~;
- (c) dyeing the tow form of filaments ~~in tow form~~; and
- (d) drying the tow form of filaments ~~in tow form~~;

wherein the tow form of filaments are dyed continuously and homogenously.

Claim 21. (currently amended) A method for preparing yarn comprising the steps of:

- (a) blending dyed fibers with un-dyed or other dyed fibers and spinning the indigo melange yarns; and
- (b) spinning yarn directly from dyed fibers.